



J. TYLER McCAULEY  
AUDITOR-CONTROLLER

**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES  
DEPARTMENT OF AUDITOR-CONTROLLER**

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March 16, 2006

TO: Mayor Michael D. Antonovich  
Supervisor Gloria Molina  
Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke  
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky  
Supervisor Don Knabe

FROM: J. Tyler McCauley   
Auditor-Controller

SUBJECT: **FRED JEFFERSON MEMORIAL FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY  
CONTRACT REVIEW**

We have completed a contract compliance review of Fred Jefferson Memorial Foster Family Agency (Fred Jefferson or Agency), a Foster Family Agency service provider. The review was conducted by the Auditor-Controller's Countywide Contract Monitoring Division.

**Background**

The Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) contracts with Fred Jefferson, a private, non-profit, community-based organization to recruit, train, and certify foster care parents for the supervision of children placed in foster care by DCFS. Once the Agency places a child, it is required to monitor the placement until the child is discharged from the program.

Fred Jefferson is required to hire qualified social workers to provide case management and act as a liaison between DCFS and foster parents. During our review, Fred Jefferson oversaw a total of 84 certified foster homes in which 136 DCFS children were placed. Fred Jefferson is located in the Second District.

DCFS pays Fred Jefferson a negotiated monthly rate, per child placement, established by the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) Funding and Rate Bureau. Based on the child's age, Fred Jefferson receives between \$1,589 and \$1,865 per

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month, per child. Out of these amounts, the Agency pays the foster parents between \$624 and \$790 per month, per child. For Fiscal Year 2004-05, DCFS paid Fred Jefferson approximately \$3,244,000.

### **Purpose/Methodology**

The purpose of the review was to determine whether Fred Jefferson was providing the services outlined in their Program Statement and County contract. We also evaluated the Agency's ability to achieve planned staffing levels. Our monitoring visit included verifying whether Fred Jefferson received the appropriate reimbursement rate for each child and whether the certified foster parents received their portion of the reimbursement rate in a timely manner. We reviewed certified foster parent files, children's case files, personnel files, and interviewed Fred Jefferson staff, the children and the foster parents. We also visited a sample of certified foster homes.

### **Results of Review**

The foster parents stated that the services they received from the Agency met their expectations and the children indicated that they enjoyed living with their foster parents. In addition, Fred Jefferson maintained documentation to support the services billed to DCFS. Fred Jefferson also paid foster parents their monthly payments in a timely manner.

Fred Jefferson's social workers did not always conduct the required number of home visits with their children. Specifically, three (23%) of 13 children were visited an average of three times a month during their first three months of placement by the Agency's social worker instead of weekly as required. In addition, the Agency did not include a closing summary relating to the children's placements as required by the County contract in the children's Termination Reports.

The details of our review, along with recommendation for corrective action, are attached.

### **Review of Report**

On March 8, 2006, we discussed our report with Fred Jefferson who agreed with the findings. In their attached response, Fred Jefferson management indicates the actions the Agency has taken to implement the recommendations. We also notified DCFS of the results of our review.

Board of Supervisors

March 16, 2005

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We thank Fred Jefferson for their cooperation and assistance during this review. Please call me if you have any questions, or your staff may contact Don Chadwick at (626) 293-1102.

JTM:MMO:DC

Attachment

c: David E. Janssen, Chief Administrative Officer  
Dr. David Sanders, Director, Department of Children and Family Services  
Augusta Gee, Administrator, Fred Jefferson Memorial Foster Family Agency  
Colleen Anderson, Community Care Licensing  
Public Information Office  
Audit Committee

**COUNTYWIDE CONTRACT MONITORING DIVISION  
FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY PROGRAM  
FISCAL YEAR 2005-2006  
FRED JEFFERSON MEMORIAL FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY**

**PROGRAM SERVICES**

**Objective**

To determine whether Fred Jefferson Memorial Foster Family Agency (Fred Jefferson or Agency) provided program services in accordance with their County contract and California Department of Social Services (CDSS) Title 22 Regulations.

**Verification**

We visited nine of the 84 Los Angeles County certified foster homes that Fred Jefferson billed the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) for in May and June 2005 and interviewed the nine foster parents and 13 children placed in the nine homes. We also reviewed the documentation in the case files and reviewed the Agency's monitoring activity.

**Results**

Generally, Fred Jefferson provided the services required in the County contract. The foster parents stated that the services they received from the Agency met their expectations and the children indicated that they enjoyed living with their foster parents. The foster parents were certified and were given appropriate training by Fred Jefferson as required by the County contract.

The Agency needs to improve their oversight of the foster homes to ensure that the foster homes are complying with all the provisions of Title 22 regulations and the County contract. In addition, Fred Jefferson needs to ensure that Termination Reports contain all the information required by the County contract and Title 22 regulations. We specifically noted the following:

**Foster Home Visitations**

- For one (11%) of the nine certified foster home visited, one child's bedroom window had security bars with an inoperable latch release. Subsequent to our review, the foster parent fixed the latch to a working condition.
- One (11%) of the nine certified foster homes did not have an upstairs emergency escape plan. The County contract and Title 22 regulations require that foster homes have a written upstairs emergency plan and a means to escape. Subsequent to our review, the Agency provided a receipt for an escape ladder.

- One (11%) of the nine certified foster homes did not have sufficient quantities of perishable and non-perishable food items. The County contract and Title 22 regulations require that foster parents maintain enough perishable and nonperishable food to meet the needs of the family for the next three meals including between meal snacks.

### Medical Services

- Three (23%) of the 13 children's did not have an initial dental examination within 30 days of placement as required by the County contract. The dental examinations were conducted an average of two months beyond the 30 day timeframe.

### Children's Records

- For three (23%) of 13 children, the Agency's social workers did not conduct the required number of home visits with the children. The County contract requires the Agency's social worker to conduct weekly visits with a child during the child's first three months of placement. For the first three months the children were visited an average of three times a month instead of the four times required.
- Two (15%) of 13 children's initial Needs and Services Plans were not completed within 30 days from the child's placement. One child's plan was completed more than three months late. The Agency could not locate the initial plan for the other child. Therefore, we could not determine if it had been prepared.

### Reporting Requirements

- 33 (100%) of 33 Termination Reports for children whose placements ended during May and June 2005, did not contain a closing summary relating to the children's placements as required by the County contract.

Fred Jefferson's management needs to ensure that staff adequately monitor foster homes to ensure the homes comply with the County contract requirements and Title 22 regulations. Fred Jefferson also needs to ensure that medical assessments are completed within 30 days of a child's placement and that staff conduct the required number of visits to the foster children. In addition, Fred Jefferson needs to ensure that Needs and Services Plans and Termination Reports include all required information and are prepared in the timeframes specified in the County contract.

### Recommendations

#### **Fred Jefferson management:**

1. **Ensure that staff adequately monitor foster homes to ensure the foster homes comply with the County contract and Title 22 Regulations.**

2. **Ensure that children receive dental examinations within 30 days of placement.**
3. **Ensure that staff conduct required number of visits per month to the foster homes.**
4. **Ensure that Needs and Services Plans and Termination Reports include all required information and are prepared within the timeframes specified in the County contract.**

### **CLIENT VERIFICATION**

#### **Objective**

To determine whether the program participants actually received the services that Fred Jefferson billed DCFS.

#### **Verification**

We interviewed 13 children placed in nine certified foster homes and nine foster parents to confirm the services Fred Jefferson billed to DCFS.

#### **Results**

The program participants interviewed stated that the services they received from Fred Jefferson met their expectations. The children interviewed also stated that they enjoyed living with their foster parents.

#### **Recommendation**

**There are no recommendations for this section.**

### **STAFFING/CASELOAD LEVELS**

#### **Objective**

Determine whether Fred Jefferson social workers' case loads do not exceed 15 placements and whether the supervising social worker does not supervise more than six social workers, as required by the County contract and CDSS Title 22 regulations.

#### **Verification**

We interviewed Fred Jefferson's administrator and supervising social worker. We also reviewed caseload statistics and payroll records for April and May 2005.

**Results**

Fred Jefferson's eight social workers maintained an average of 14 cases and two contract social workers maintained an average caseload of six cases. In addition, two supervising social workers supervised an average of five social workers. However, Fred Jefferson did not obtain written declarations from the two contract social workers stating that their total caseloads from contracting Agencies does not exceed 15 placed children as required by the County contract. Subsequent to our review, Fred Jefferson obtained signed declarations from their contract social workers.

**Recommendation**

5. **Fred Jefferson management ensure that contract social workers a sign written declaration stating that the social worker's total contracted caseload does not exceed 15 placed children.**

**STAFFING QUALIFICATIONS****Objective**

Determine whether Fred Jefferson's staff meets the education and work experience qualifications required by their County contract and CDSS Title 22 regulations. In addition, determine whether Fred Jefferson conducted hiring clearances prior to hiring their staff and provided ongoing training to staff.

**Verification**

We interviewed Fred Jefferson's director and reviewed each staff's personnel file for documentation to confirm their education and work experience qualifications, hiring clearances and ongoing training.

**Results**

Fred Jefferson's director, supervisors and social workers possessed the education and work experience required by the County contract and Title 22 regulations. Fred Jefferson also provided ongoing trainings to staff assigned to the County contract. However, one staff's initial health screening examination was completed three months after the required timeframe specified on the County contract.

**Recommendation**

6. **Fred Jefferson management ensure that staff complete their initial health screening examinations within the timeframes specified in the County contract.**



**Fred Jefferson Memorial Foster Family Agency**  
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March 10, 2006

To: Mayor Michael D. Antonovich  
Supervisor Gloria Molina  
Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke  
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky  
Supervisor Don Knabe

From: Augusta Gee, MSW  
Administrator

RE: Fred Jefferson Memorial Foster Family Agency Contract Review

After reviewing the report from the Department of Auditor- Controller, Fred Jefferson Memorial Foster Family Agency is in general agreement with the findings and appreciates the following recommendations:

The following Corrective Action Plan was implemented:

**Recommendation 1: Ensure that staff adequately monitors foster homes to ensure the foster homes comply with the County contract and Title 22 Regulations.**

1. Quality assurance staff will continue to monitor and evaluate the interior and exterior of all foster homes on a quarterly basis. Additionally, agency social worker will check monthly the homes to ensure that the security bars are working properly, if applicable.
2. Quality assurance staff will continue to monitor and evaluate the interior and exterior of all foster homes on a quarterly basis. Effective immediately, all agency social workers will review and monitor monthly all escape plans/escape ladders for each home on their caseload.
3. Quality assurance staff will continue to monitor and evaluate the interior and exterior of all foster homes on a quarterly basis. QA staff was sent to the identified home immediately to evaluate the situation and was able to find more than appropriate amounts of perishable and non-perishable foods in this home during their visit. Additionally, agency social worker will continue to monitor this home for compliance with food regulation on a monthly basis.

**Recommendation 2: Ensure that children receive dental examinations within 30 days of placement**

4. Effective immediately, further internal controls were put in place to ensure that initial dental Examinations are completed within 30 days of placement. The social worker supervisors will give written notification of the due date of initial dental Examinations for each social worker they supervise.

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**Recommendation 3: Ensure that staff conducts required number of visits per month to the foster homes.**

5. Effective immediately, during staff trainings and individual supervision with supervising social workers, agency social workers were further instructed to continue to make weekly visits to foster homes. Social work supervisors are conducting monthly unannounced "Ride Alongs", with each social worker on their caseload. Further, a checklist has been developed to ensure contract compliance.

**Recommendation 4: Ensure that Needs and Services plans and Termination Reports include all required information and are prepared within the timeframes specified in the County contract.**

6. Effective immediately, a new form has been developed to ensure the timely completion of the initial Needs and Services Plans. The social worker supervisors will give written notification of the due date of initial Needs and Services Plans for each social worker they supervise.

7. Effective immediately, Fred Jefferson has revised its current Termination Reports/Closing Summary to include all required information. The supervising social worker will give written notice of the due date of the Termination/Closing Summary for each social worker they supervise.

**Recommendation 5: Ensure that contract social workers sign a written declaration stating that the social worker's total contracted caseload does not exceed 15 placed children.**

8. Effective immediately, all new agency social workers must sign a written declaration stating that the social worker's total contracted caseload does not exceed 15 placed children. The declaration has become part of the employment packet.

**Recommendation 6: Ensure that staff completes their initial health screening examinations within the timeframes specified in the County contract.**

9. Effective immediately, all hired staff will be required to have an initial health screening prior to their beginning date of employment. The Administrative Assistant will monitor and review to ensure compliance.

Fred Jefferson Memorial Foster Family Agency appreciates the Auditor-Controller's recommendations as we always strive to improve our performance and the quality of our service.

Sincerely,

  
Augusta Gee, MSW  
Administrator

***WHERE CHILDREN COME FIRST!***